

The University of Alberta Department of Music presents:

MUSIC AT CONVOCATION HALL



From Scandinavia - Brass!

Friday, January 16, 2009

7:15 pm Pre-concert Talk by **Petar Dundjerski**

8:00 pm Concert

Convocation Hall, Arts Building, University of Alberta



DEPARTMENT OF
MUSIC
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Program

Five Preludes

Carl Nielsen
(1865-1931)
arr Mogens Andresen

Brass Quintet (1998)

Anders Hillborg
(b. 1954)

Quintet, Op. 79

Vagn Holmboe
(1909-1996)

- I Poco lento
- II Allegro
- III Adagio
- IV Vivace

Intermission

Three pieces for Brass Quintet

Bo Nilsson
(b.1937)

- Endepunkt (1985)
- Wendepunkt (1981)
- Infrastruktur

Suite for Brass Quintet

Edvard Grieg
(1843-1907)
arr Alan Civil

- Sarabande, Op.40
- Bridal Song, Op.17, № 24
- Lullaby, Op.66, № 19
- Ballade, Op.65, № 5
- Wedding Day in Trolldhaugen, Op.65, № 6

Russ Whitehead, trumpet
Robin Doyon, trumpet
Allene Hackleman, horn
Kathryn McIntosh, trombone
Scott Whetham, tuba

Program Notes

by Andrea Eng

Carl Nielsen Five Preludes (notes not available)

Anders Hillborg (b 1954)

Anders Hillborg is a Swedish born composer who completed his formal musical training at the Royal College of Music in Stockholm. He has been a freelance composer in Sweden since finishing musical studies in 1982. His music is characterized by the use of microtonalities, including his most influential work *Clang and Fury* (1989) a large scale work for orchestra in which the orchestra is separated into three sections, each one tuned to a different frequency.

Hillborg is the recipient of numerous awards in his home country and abroad, including recognition in the UNESCO Composer Rostrum in 1992, 1995, and 2002, as well as being named Swedish Composer of the Year in 1995.

Brass Quintet (1998)

Brass Quintet (1998) was commissioned by the Swedish National Institute of Concerts for the Stockholm Chamber Brass ensemble. The concept is for the music to sound played as if “back to front” to imitate a recording being played in reverse. The overall work is in ABA form. The A section is highly contrapuntal with musical lines that pass seamlessly from each instrument to the next, creating the aural impression that the ensemble is a single instrument playing one melodic line. The contrasting B section gives the listener the sense of the needle skipping on a record with rapid trills and repeated notes. The interwoven lines display each performer’s virtuosity while creating an aesthetic whole.

Vagn Holmboe Quintet, Op. 79 (notes not available)

Bo Nilsson (b 1937)

An avant-garde Swedish composer, Bo Nilsson was born in Skelleftehamn, Sweden in 1937. He is largely self-taught in composition and received only basic musical training from a local piano teacher as a child. Nilsson came to the attentions of the European avant-garde with his first composition *Zwei Stücke* (1955) when it was broadcast on the West German radio. His *Frequenzen* (1957) premiered at Darmstadt in 1957 and since then he has become a regular contributor to the summer programs there. Since the 1960s his reputation has only grown in European new music circles and his compositional output includes a wide variety of genres including chamber music, orchestra works, and film music.

Nilsson is active as a composer, writer, and performer. He plays trumpet with various brass ensembles in Europe and has appeared as a soloist with several ensembles and orchestras throughout the world.

Three Pieces for Brass Quintet

Wendepunkt (1981)

Endepunkt (1985)

Infrastruktur (1986)

This suite is made up of three pieces that come together to create a triptych of various possible sonorities capable of a brass ensemble. Originally scored for brass quintet and live electronics, the composer also allows for performance with instruments only. Like many of Nilsson’s works, this suite is based on various Swedish literary sources, and Nilsson describes this

overall work in a statement in his book *The Missile, or Life in a Cap*: “The seams were of an extraterrestrial beauty.”

Wendepunkt (Turning Point) (1981) is full of lush sonorities that one would expect of film music, while liberal use of dissonant harmonies and new modal organization bring the music into the twentieth century. The long, sustained notes of the melodic lines give a sense of musical stasis in time.

In direct contrast, *Endepunkt (End Point)* (1985) is disjunct, dissonant, and contrapuntal. The piece also plays as a conversation with measure-to-measure counterpoint between the solo tuba and the rest of the ensemble. The quick and conversation-like lines trade back and forth busily, as if interrupting each other.

Some consider *Infrastruktur (Infrastructure)* (1986) to be one of the finest pieces of music featuring the trumpet in contemporary music repertoire, not just in Sweden, but also in the world. It is rarely performed or recorded due to both the difficulty of the piece itself and technical logistics when performed with electronics.

Edvard Grieg (1843 – 1907)

If any name is synonymous with Nordic music, it is undoubtedly that of Edvard Grieg. Grieg was born in Bergen, Norway in 1843 to a musical family that encouraged his musical abilities. He entered the Leipzig Conservatory in 1858 and studied there for four years before returning to his home country of Norway. Upon his return from Austria Grieg befriended nationalist composers Rikard Nordraak and Ole Bull. These relationships became integral to Grieg’s discovery of the traditional sounds of the Nordic musical heritage and, in turn, his Nordic musical identity.

Grieg suffered from ill health for his entire adult life, a lingering ailment from a severe bout of tuberculosis he suffered while still a student at Leipzig. Despite this encumbrance demand for his talent as a conductor and concert pianist lead to extensive travels throughout Europe. Although his German training is evident in his music, Grieg is well known as a Norwegian nationalist through his use of folk tunes and melodies. His works can be found in several genres including incidental music, concerto, and symphony, as well as a very large output of short works for solo piano. Every one of his pieces reflects his Norwegian roots through the use of folk melodies. Much of Grieg’s music – particularly his songs and piano works – has been rescored for other instruments or ensembles.

Suite for Brass Quintet (arr Alan Civil)

The five pieces that make up this suite come from various other sources in Grieg’s output and are rescored for brass quintet by Alan Civil.

Written for string orchestra in 1884, the Sarabande is the second movement of Grieg’s *Fra Holberg tid (From Holberg’s Time)*. Composed for the bicentennial celebration of Norwegian poet and playwright Ludvig Holberg (1684–1754), the suite is subtitled the “suite in the olden style”, and pays tribute to several Baroque dance and suite forms.

The “Brurelat” (Bridal Song) is from Grieg’s first significant set of piano pieces, *25 Norske folkeviser og dandser (Norwegian Folk Songs and Dances)*, op. 17 (1869). The second of two settings of bridal songs from the set this movement uses small themes and reflects the lighthearted joviality of a wedding day.

“Gjendines bådnlåt” (Gjendine’s Lullaby) is the only piece from the *19 Norske folkeviser (19 Norwegian folksongs)*, op. 66 (1896) that was a newly composed piano piece based on folk song because the rest of the pieces within the set are piano transcriptions of Norwegian folksongs. from the town of Skogadalsbeen, where Grieg spent the summer of 1891.

and dedicated to Gjendine Slaalien, a dairymaid from the town of Skogadalsbeen, where Grieg spent the summer of 1891.

“I balladetone” (Ballad) and “Bryllupsdag på Troldhaugen” (Wedding Day at Troldhaugen) are from *Lyriske småstykker* (*Lyric Pieces*), op. 65 (1896). “Ballad” begins slow, mournful, and intimate, but rises in intensity to a powerful climax that dispels the sense of mourning through its musical tone, despite using the same melody. “Wedding Day at Troldhaugen” in ABA form is full of the joy and excitement of a summer wedding. The interjections of what can be interpreted as the excitement and chatter of the wedding guests accent the bright and excited march-like A section that recalls a wedding processional. A quiet B section follows this with its intimate exchange between treble and bass voices. The A section returns again, in a slightly slower tempo, to act as a recessional for the celebration.

MUSICIANS

ROBIN DOYON

Born in East Angus, Quebec, Robin Doyon received his bachelor and masters degree in classical interpretation at the University of Montreal. He has studied with many masters of the trumpet including Allen Vizzutti, Jens Lindemann, and James Thompson. In 2002 he was Laureate of the National Music Festival, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra Competition, and the Radio-Canada Young Artists Competition.

He has also been the recipient of numerous other prizes including the 2007 prize of Grand Distinction from the Montreal Conservatory of Music. Doyon is presently a member of the Grand Ballet of Canada Orchestra and is a regular performer in the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, the National Arts Centre Orchestra, and the Laval, Longueuil, and Metropolitan orchestras. He also performs with the contemporary ensemble of Montreal and the Contemporary Music Society of Quebec. Robin Doyon is professor at the University of Sherbrooke and was recently named solo trumpet with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra.

RUSSELL WHITEHEAD, TRUMPET

Russell has released his debut CD, *Prairie Scenes* on the Arktos label in June, 2006 and was appointed Acting Principal Trumpet of the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra for the 2004-05 season. Currently, he plays Third Trumpet with the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, solos and free lances with many of the ensembles in Edmonton, adjudicates throughout Western Canada and teaches at the University of Alberta, King's University College and through his home.

ALLENE HACKLEMAN, HORN

Allene Hackleman has been principal horn of the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra since 2004. A native of Vancouver, Allene began studying the horn under the tutelage of her father, Martin Hackleman. She earned a bachelor of music degree from the University of Cincinnati. Ms Hackleman served as an apprentice in the National Academy Orchestra of Canada, and has performed with the National Symphony Orchestra (Washington, D.C.), and the Montréal Symphony. Allene Hackleman has performed concerti with the Edmonton Symphony, Alberta Baroque Ensemble and the Victoria Symphony. She is currently a member of the Summit Brass ensemble and as such has is on faculty at the Rafael Mendez Brass Institute in Denver and performed with Summit Brass on their most recent CD release. Allene pursues a keen interest in chamber music and in 2008 was a performer at the Festival of the Sound in Parry Sound, Ontario.

KATHRYN MACINTOSH, TROMBONE

Kathryn Macintosh was born in Montreal but spent her formative years in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. She attended Acadia University and the University of Toronto, where she studied with Gordon Sweeney. Further studies followed, in masterclasses with Ralph Sauer of the Los Angeles Philharmonic and Michael Mulcahy of the Chicago Symphony. Kathryn began her career with the Edmonton Symphony in 1983. She has also appeared with the Calgary Philharmonic, the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony and the Hamilton Philharmonic. In 2008, Kathryn had the opportunity to study with Dennis Miller and Pierre Beaudry of the Montreal Symphony. She is an active member of Edmonton's musical community, playing chamber music and teaching clinics and private students.

SCOTT WHETHAM, TUBA

Scott joined the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra as Principal Tuba in 1984. He has performed with the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, the Vancouver Opera and Ballet Orchestras, the Calgary Philharmonic and the National Symphony Orchestra of Peru. Scott also performs with the Tarragon Tea Orchestra (a European style salon orchestra). He has been broadcast on the C.B.C. as recitalist and composer. His trumpet choir ensemble composition "Spotted Bear", was recently premiered at the International Trumpet Conference in Banff, Alberta. Scott teaches at the University of Alberta and Musicamp Alberta.

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